News-item captioned "Gunning for the press"

†*110. SHRI JANESHWAR MISRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:—

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Gunning for the Press" published in The Hindu of 7th November, 1999; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

The competent authority under Rule 177 of the Army Rules, framed by the Central Government under Section 191 of Army Act, has ordered a Court of Inquiry to investigate into allegations relating to disclosure of certain documents, which constituted violation of the Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923. The Court of Inquiry can summon witnesses, including civilian witnesses, by virtue of the power vested in it under Section 135(1) of the Army Act. The Court had issued summons to some journalists in September/October 1999, in connection with this sensitive investigation. However, after considering the statements of other witnesses on record, the Court decided to dispense with the attendance of the journalists.

No action by the Government is called for in this case.

Anomalies in Tariff Structures

*111. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the anomalies in the Tariff Structures in several heavy industry sectors, as reported in the Hindustan Times, dated the 19th November, 1999;

†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.